[English]

Post Offices Running from Small Houses

1502. SHRI RAJKESHAR SINGH : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of post offices are functioning in small houses in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the number thereof, circle-wise;

(c) whether the Government propose to construct buildings for such post offices; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, circle-wise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Telephone Connections in U.P.

1503. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of telephone connections installed during the last six months in U.P. particularly in Agra Exchange;

(b) the number of telephones installed during the last three months but not functioning;

(c) the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which these telephones are likely to start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a)

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(b) to (d) Telephones installed during last 3 months are operational, except for faults, which when reported are attended to promptly.

Purchase of Power from Neighbouring Countries

1504. DR. M. JAGANNATH :
SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :
JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA :
SHRI RAJKESHAR SINGH ;

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken a decision to import electricity to meet the shortage of electricity in the country;

(b) if so, the names of countries and the estimated quantum of electricity likely to be imported;

(c) whether the required transmission arrangements have been considered for importing electricity;

(d) if so, the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred in this regard;

(e) whether the said imported electricity would be beneficial from economical point of view; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (f) The status of exchange of power with neighbouring countries is as follows :

(1) **Bhutan**

India is importing power from Chukha Hydro Electric Project in Bhutan for the past few years and transmitting the same in the various constituent states through existing transmission network constructed by Powergrid. The quantum of power imported is 1388 million units per annum. Government of Bhutan also buys power from West Bengal and Assam State Electricity Board.

(2) **Nepal**

The power exchange between India and Nepal commenced in October, 1971 following Secretary level discussions between the two countries. The quantum of exchange of power initially was upto 5 MW which at present has been raised to 50 MW. The exchange of power takes place at 17 places along the Indo-Nepal border through the existing transmission network. The Mahakali Treaty between Government of India and Nepal provides that Nepal shall have the right to receive 70 million units of energy on a continuous basis, free of cost, from the date of entry into force of the Treaty. For this purpose India is required to construct a 132 KV transmission line upto Mahendra Nagar, Nepal on the Indo-Nepal Border from the Tanakpur Power Station. The transmission line will be constructed by Powergrid Corporation of India Ltd. An umbrella agreement between India and Nepal has also been initiated in February, 1996 opening the entry of private sector in the exchange of power between the two countries.

(3) **Pakistan**

A proposal for the sale of power from Pakistan to India was received from Indian Embassy, Washington. The proposal is under preliminary stage of assessment and scrutiny. Consequent to the commissioning of the last unit of 1300 MW World Bank funded, Hub River Power Project near Karachi, Pakistan is likely to have a 1000 MW surplus during the monsoon season. The surplus is largely